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Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge lighting upgrade focuses on energy savings and efficiency

Fast Facts:

- Energy-efficient LED bulbs are replacing older fixtures on the Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge.**
- LEDs are as much as 20 percent more effective in illuminating the roadway -- increasing visibility and customer safety.**
- Both the U.S. and Canadian arches will get a colorful lighting change starting in August.**

June 23, 2015 -- International Bridge customers and residents of the sister cities of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and Ontario may have recently noticed things are getting a little brighter crossing the border as the pole-mounted lights along the bridge deck traffic lanes get an upgrade.

"This lighting upgrade project is certainly focused on energy savings and efficiency," said Bridge Engineer Karl Hansen, "LEDs are as much as 20 percent more effective in illuminating the roadway. That increases driver visibility and customer safety."

International Bridge Administration (IBA) staff have replaced a portion of the 56 high pressure sodium (HPS) lighting fixtures on the bridge with new energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures. The rest of the older light fixtures will be replaced in the next few weeks. For consistency, the new lights were selected to closely match the lighting type and design of fixtures to be installed on poles on the Canada Customs Plaza and Toll Plaza projects.

In August, bridge viewers will see a change in the color of the yellow-white lights mounted on the high curved arch portions of the bridge. The IBA plans to upgrade the 96 HPS bulbs along the top

of the U.S. and Canadian arch spans with colored LEDs later this summer. The red, white, and blue array of lights on the U.S. arch and the red and white array on the Canadian arch will represent the colors of each nation's flag and will be similar to the temporary lighting strands installed as part of the bridge's 50th anniversary celebration in 2012.

The Canadian electrical grid powers the Canadian half of the bridge while the U.S. grid powers the U.S. portion. The existing white arch lights, which are fed from both grids, will be taken offline in late July to allow bridge staff to safely install the new colored bulbs. The IBA expects the 96 new bulbs to be in place so the new colored light system can be put back online on Wednesday, Aug. 12. The lighting circuit is controlled by photoelectric cells, so the new colored arch lights will come on at dusk.

"The service life for LEDs are warranted for 10 years -- more than three times the service life of HPS lamps," said IBA electrician Troy Raffaele. "This will improve workplace safety for bridge staff when maintaining the lights, and will enhance the nighttime view of the bridge for residents and visitors to the sister cities of Sault Ste. Marie."

The IBA estimates the cost to purchase, install and maintain the new bridge deck and arch lighting at \$55,108 (USD). The LED lights are expected to cost \$27,188 after combined rebates of \$10,850 from the SaveONenergy program from Public Utilities Canada (PUC) and the Energy Optimization program at Cloverland Electric. The IBA expects a 55 percent reduction in energy usage, which will result in savings of at least \$44,310 in energy costs and \$30,330 in maintenance costs over the life of the fixtures. The expected payback on the investment is six years.

For more information on the International Bridge, please visit www.saultbridge.com or follow us on twitter at [www.twitter.com/saultbridge](https://twitter.com/saultbridge).

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Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge:



Electrician Troy Raffaele replaces one of the 56 HPS light fixtures on the Sault Ste. Marie International bridge with a more energy efficient LED fixture.